

Appendix D. Public Notice

**PUBLIC NOTICE
FEMA NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY**

**DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
RR 028-DESIRE AREA GROUP C and RR-029-DESIRE AREA GROUP D
RESTORATION (AMENDED SCOPE OF WORK)
(PROJECT NUMBER: 2021-RR028 AND 2021-RR029)
NEW ORLEANS, ORLEANS PARISH, LOUISIANA 70126 *FEMA-1603-DR-LA***

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared a draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for a proposed street reconstruction project in New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana. In order to comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations [C.F.R.] Parts 1500-1508) (Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act 2005), a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA), which would encompass the project now under review, was developed by FEMA. The Programmatic EA was entitled "The City of New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Joint Infrastructure Recovery Request Project" (JIRR). This PEA concluded with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), dated 16 June 2016.

Hurricane Katrina made landfall on 29 August 2005, near the town of Buras, Louisiana, as a Category 3 storm with sustained winds of more than 125 miles per hour. The accompanying high winds, heavy rains, and flooding caused an accumulation of various types of debris on the streets and rights-of-way of New Orleans. Rain accumulation, in combination with debris blockage, saturated soils, and insufficient drainage, caused flooding and standing water in most of the parish/city. As a result of this event, the roadway system incurred considerable damage.

The project scope of work currently under consideration for FEMA grant funds consists of segments of numerous streets in the Desire Neighborhood of New Orleans, Louisiana (RR028-Desire Area Group C Road Network and RR029-Desire Area Group D Road Network). Prior to Hurricane Katrina, portions of these streets were already in a deteriorated condition. As a result, only certain sections were FEMA-eligible for storm-related repairs. Although these streets were not in good repair before the storm, due to the aftereffects of the hurricane, they have since worsened considerably. Rather than leave these roads in an undesirable state, the Applicant wishes to completely reconstruct the blocks under consideration to a level beyond their pre-storm condition.

The planned work would involve the repair and/or complete replacement of the areas of the street blocks specified in the project construction plans down to the sub-grade, and would also include new curbs, as well as ADA-compliant ramps where they do not currently exist. As necessary, storm sewers, manholes, and drain lines would be adjusted, relocated, or removed. All work would occur within previously disturbed rights-of-way. The construction scope may also incorporate a combination of utility infrastructure structures/components, including but not limited to, minor drainage (storm sewer) (< 36" in diameter), water, and/or sewerage (sanitary sewer) mains and service lateral and house connection repairs, relocations/offsets, or replacements; utility manhole, drop manhole, catch basin, drop inlet, conflict box, and other utility structure adjustments, repairs or replacements, including associated trench excavation, bedding, backfill and pavement restoration or pipe boring jacking operations and associated pit restoration; water and sewer meter, valve, hydrant, and other utility system appurtenances and components cleaning, adjustments, relocations, repairs or replacements within the public right-of-way or publically maintained servitude or easement.

The City of New Orleans (CNO) has submitted an amended scope of work for the Desire Road Network to FEMA for re-evaluation. These modifications are being proposed in response to FEMA comments on the

initial submission as well as changes required as result of field surveys confirming the condition of streets within the work area. The specific block segments where these proposed changes would occur are detailed in Table 1 of the SEA. The scope of work for this amendment does not involve any new block segments not evaluated in the initial submission; however, some work areas have been expanded.

Portions of the Desire Area Group C and D Road Network project area overlies or is in close proximity to the footprint of the Agriculture Street Landfill (EPA Registry ID: 110009336557), an active municipal landfill for the New Orleans area from approximately 1909 to 1958. The Agriculture Street Landfill site was placed on the National Priority List (also known as Superfund sites) in 1994 by the USEPA after investigations recorded elevated levels of contaminants consisting of lead, arsenic, and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons in the soil. A series of removal actions, or short-term cleanups, addressed remediation of threats to human health and the environment. The remedy for subsurface contamination at the Agriculture Street Landfill Superfund Site includes a subsurface geotextile mat over contaminated material left in place. The geotextile mat is covered by 18 inches of clean soil and a vegetative cover in the rights-of-ways. No waste source material was removed from beneath roadways, sidewalks, parking areas, or building foundation slabs.

The purpose of this amended draft SEA is to analyze potential environmental impacts of the proposed project that require additional site-specific analysis. FEMA will use the findings in this draft SEA in order to determine whether a FONSI is appropriate or whether preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is warranted. The draft SEA examines a preferred action and two alternatives. Therefore, FEMA will consider the following: a “No Action Alternative”; the Preferred Action Alternative, which is to completely reconstruct the segments of the streets and sidewalks under consideration; and an Alternative Action, which is to repair the streets to their pre-storm condition. The Draft FONSI is FEMA’s finding that the Preferred Action will not have a significant effect on the human and natural environment.

The draft SEA and draft FONSI are available for review at the New Orleans Main Public Library, located at 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70112 (hours of operation are 10:00AM to 8:00PM on Mondays-Thursdays, 10:00AM to 5:00PM on Fridays-Saturdays, and 1:00PM to 5:00PM on Sundays); and the Norman Mayer Library located at 3001 Gentilly Boulevard New Orleans, LA 70122 (hours of operation are 10:00AM to 8:00PM on Mondays-Thursdays, 10:00AM to 5:00PM on Fridays-Saturdays, and 1:00PM to 5:00PM on Sundays). The documents can also be downloaded from FEMA’s website at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/environmental-historic/nepa/programmatic-environmental-17..> A public notice for the project will be published on Friday, September 22, 2023; Wednesday, September 27, 2023, and Friday, September 29, 2023 in the Advocate/Times-Picayune, the journal of record for Orleans Parish. Additionally, the draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment will be made available for review at the New Orleans Public Library located at 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70112 and the Norman Meyer Library located at 3001 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70122. Additionally, there will be a 30-day comment period, beginning on Friday, September 22, 2023, and concluding on October 22, 2023, at 4:00PM. Written comments may be mailed to: DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY - FEMA EHP - Desire Area Road Network Amendment, 1500 MAIN STREET, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, 70802. Comments also may be e-mailed to fema-noma@dhs.gov or faxed to (225) 346-5848. Verbal comments will be accepted or recorded at (225) 267-2962. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft SEA and associated FONSI will become final.